

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 AID-05 HA-05 /067 W  
-----029372 171053Z /13

R 161120Z JAN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY MASERU  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8061  
INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE  
AMEMBASSY MBABANE  
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA  
AMCONSUL CAPETOWN

C O N F I D E N T I A L MASERU 0136

AF/S FOR AMBASSADOR NORLAND

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, LT  
SUBJECT: RUMORS AND DENIALS OF ELECTIONS

1. SUMMARY: AN INCREASE OF ELECTION DISCUSSIONS AMONG ALL  
PEOPLE IN MASERU HAS BEEN ADDED TO THE PERPETUAL DEMANDS  
FOR ELECTIONS BY VARIOUS OPPOSITION LEADERS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE BLOEMFONTEIN MORNING NEWSPAPER, "THE FRIEND", OF  
JANUARY 12, 1978, CARRIED AN ARTICLE STATING THAT THE PRIME  
MINISTER HAD REJECTED THE CALL FOR ELECTIONS BY THE U.D.P.  
OPPOSITION LEADER AND WENT ON TO QUOTE THE PRIME MINISTER AS  
SAYING HE WOULD GO TO THE POLLS QUOTE ONLY AT THE COMMAND OF  
THE NATION UNQUOTE. THE LUNCH-TIME NEWS BROADCAST OF RADIO  
LESOTHO SEEMED TO CORRECT THIS NEWS STORY BY SAYING THAT THE  
PRIME MINISTER STATED THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS STRONGER THAN  
EVER AND THERE WILL BE NO NEED FOR ELECTIONS FOR SEVERAL YEARS

3. HOWEVER, IN THE MEANTIME, SOME BNP (PRIME MINISTER'S  
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PARTY) ACTIVISTS, TAKING THE PRIME MINISTER AT HIS WORD AS  
QUOTED BY "THE FRIEND", HAD BEGUN CANVASSING CIVIL  
SERVANTS, REPORTEDLY TO GET THEM TO JOIN TOGETHER IN A  
NATIONAL CALL FOR ELECTIONS. MRS. CHIMOMBE, DEPUTY CHIEF  
OF PROTOCOL AND AMERICAN DESK OFFICER AT FOREIGN AFFAIRS,  
TOLD EMBOFF THAT SHE IS FRIGHTENED TO PUT HER NAME TO ANYTHING  
BECAUSE OF THE CALL FOR ELECTIONS FAILS, THOSE INVOLVED WOULD

LIKELY BE PUNISHED.

4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE AMOUNT OF ELECTION TALK HAS DEFINITELY INCREASED SINCE THE NEW YEAR, IT HARDLY SEEMS LIKELY TO EVENTUATE IN ELECTIONS IN THE NEAR FUTURE. EMBASSY WILL FOLLOW THIS CLOSELY AND REPORT SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS. END COMMENT.

5. FOR AMBASSADOR NORLAND: MRS. CHIMOMBE APPROACHED EMBOFF WITH SUGGESTION CUM REQUEST THAT AMERICAN, CANADIAN, AND DANISH REPRESENTATIVES APPROACH PRIME MINISTER ASAP WITH DISCUSSIONS RELATING TO ELECTIONS, HUMAN RIGHTS AND AID. SHE FEELS THAT ELECTION FEVER IS QUICKLY APPROACHING THE PEAK FOR ACTION AND THAT THE OPPORTUNITY SHOULD NOT BE MISSED TO LEND THE WEIGHT OF OUR INTEREST TO POSSIBLE MOVEMENT TOWARD ELECTIONS. EMBOFF WAS NON-COMMITTAL IN DISCUSSIONS WITH MRS. CHIMOMBE.  
STOKES

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** ELECTIONS  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 16 jan 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
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**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
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